

## Message Text

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INFO OCT-01 SS-20 RSC-01 CCO-00 SSO-00 ISO-00 /026 R

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DRAFTED BY: P:KKJONIETZ

APPROVED BY: P:ELPECK

S/S:SRGAMMON

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T STATE 222918

TOPOL 7

FOLLOWING SENT ACTION SECSTATE INFO AMMAN BEIRUT MOSCOW TEL AVIV  
USUN FROM CAIRO NOV 11

QUOTE

S E C R E T CAIRO 3475

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: MARR EG UR

SUBJECT: REPORT OF SOVIET EQUIPMENT IN EGYPT; SOVIET VIEW  
OF MILITARY SITUATION

1. SUMMARY: TASS OFFICER STATES THAT USSR HAS  
DELIVERED SURFACE-TO-SURFACE MISSILES AND FLOGGERS TO  
EGYPT. END SUMMARY.

2. DURING DOURSE OF CONVERSATION NOVEMBER 10, USINTOFF  
ASKED DEPUTY TASS DIRECTOR YEDRASHNIKOV, IDENTIFIED AS  
A PROBABLE RIS OFFICER, ABOUT REPORTS OF SOVIET-MANNED  
SSM'S IN EGYPT. YEDRASHNIKOV EXPLAINED THAT AFTER  
CONSIDERABLE PRESSURE BY EGYPTIANS, SOVIETS HAD FINALLY  
AGREED TO SEND LIMITED NUMBER OF SSM'S (HE DID NOT  
GIVE PRECISE FIGURE BUT SAID THAT USINTOFF'S UNDER-  
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STANDING OF APPROXIMATELY 40 WAS "ABOUT RIGHT") ALONG

WITH SOVIET CREWS TO EGYPT. THEY HAD ARRIVED AT CAIRO WEST SHORTLY BEFORE OCTOBER 16, WHEN SADAT HAD SPOKEN OF PRESENCE OF ZAFIR MISSILES CAPABLE OF STRIKING ISRAEL IN DEPTH. YEDRASHNIKOV CONTINUED THAT IMMEDIATELY PRECEDING OCTOBER 22 CEASEFIRE, SEVERAL OF THESE MISSILES HAD BEEN LAUNCHED AGAINST ISRAELI POSITIONS. HE SAID HE BELIEVED THAT THESE ISRAELI TARGETS WERE IN GAZA AREA.

3. YEDRASHNIKOV CONTINUED THAT PURPOSE OF SSM'S WAS TO POSE THREAT OF RETALIATION AGAINST ISRAELI CIVILIAN TARGETS SHOULD ISRAEL STRIKE DIRECTLY AT CAIRO OR OTHER POPULATED CENTERS IN EGYPT. THEY WERE MANNED ONLY BY SOVIET CREWS AND WERE UNDER EXCLUSIVE SOVIET CONTROL. YEDRASHNIKOV ADDED THAT IN VIEW OF SMALL SIZE OF WARHEAD, IMPACT OF SSM'S WAS PRIMARILY POLITICAL. HE NOTED PROBABILITY THAT THEY WOULD BE USED SHOULD ISRAELIS THREATEN CAIRO.

4. IN RESPONSE TO QUESTION, YEDRASHNIKOV ACKNOWLEDGED THAT A NUMBER (UNSTATED) OF MIG-23'S HAD ALSO BEEN DELIVERED TO EGYPT. HE SAID THEY WERE MANNED BY EGYPTIAN PILOTS, AND NOT BY SOVIETS.

5. REGARDING OTHER EQUIPMENT, YEDRASHNIKOV CLAIMED NO KNOWLEDGE OF LARGE NUMBERS OF ARMORED VEHICLES WITH SOVIET CREWS IN EGYPT. CONCERNING PERSONNEL, HE SAID THAT SOVIET ELEMENT SENT TO EGYPT TO OBSERVE THE CEASEFIRE WAS STILL BARRACKED ON OUTSKIRTS OF CAIRO AND HAD NOT BEEN DEPLOYED INTO FIELD.

6. USINTOFF ASKED YEDRASHNIKOV FOR AN ESTIMATE OF PRESENT EGYPTIAN MILITARY SITUATION. HE REPLIED THAT EGYPTIANS WERE IN HIGHLY DANGEROUS POSITION AT TIME OF OCTOBER 22 CEASE-FIRE, BUT HAD SUBSEQUENTLY CONSIDERABLY STRENGTHENED THEIR POSITION OPPOSITE ISRAELI "POCKET" ON WEST BANK. HE THOUGHT THAT IT WAS NOW "TECHNICALLY POSSIBLE" FOR EGYPTIAN ARMY TO DESTROY ISRAELI FORCE ON WEST BANK SHOULD IT DECIDE TO DO SO. YEDRASHNIKOV REPEATED THAT THIS WAS A POSSIBILITY AND  
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NOT A CERTAINTY; AND HE THOUGHT THAT SADAT HAD HELD BACK FROM RESUMING HOSTILITIES OUT OF CAUTION AND OUT OF DESIRE TO SEE IF DIPLOMACY WOULD ACHIEVE HIS ENDS WITHOUT FURTHER FIGHTING. YEDRASHNIKOV NOTED THAT THERE HAD BEEN CONSIDERABLE PRESSURE FOR RESUMPTION OF FIGHTING BEFORE ARRIVAL OF SECRETARY, BUT THIS HAD ABATED WITHIN PAST SEVERAL DAYS.

7. DURING THE CONVERSATION, YEDRASHNIKOV SAID THAT SOVIETS WERE INTERESTED IN SEEING SUCCESS OF US EFFORTS TO STABILIZE CEASE-FIRE AND TO ACHIEVE WITHDRAWAL OF ISRAELI FORCES FROM EGYPT. HE SAID THAT SOVIETS WERE UNDER CONSTANT PRESSURE FROM EGYPTIANS TO MAKE GOOD ON KOSYGIN'S AND BREZHNEV'S PROMISE TO ASSIST THEM IN ACHIEVING MAJOR ISRAELI WITHDRAWAL, AND HE INDICATED THAT USSR WOULD LIKE TO SEE THIS PRESSURE REDUCED BY EFFECTIVE US INTERVENTION WITH ISRAELIS.

8. BIO NOTE: AT END OF CONVERSATION, YEDRASHNIKOV SAID USINTOFF SHOULD UNDERSTAND THAT PRESENT SOVIET POLITICAL LEADERSHIP DID NOT, IN THE EYES OF SOVIETS OF YEDRASHNIKOV'S GENERATION, SEE THE WORLD THE WAY IT REALLY WAS: ITS MEMBERSHIP WAS, TO A DEGREE, ISOLATED FROM THE REALITIES OF CHANGE. IN SAYING THIS, YEDRASHNIKOV APPEARED TO BE TALKING OUT OF CLASS, ALTHOUGH IT IS POSSIBLE THAT HE WAS PASSING ON ANOTHER ONE OF HIS MANY MESSAGES.

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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
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**Disposition Authority:** golinofr  
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**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
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**TAGS:** MARR, EG, UR, XF  
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